

Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 PM-07 NSC-07 SS-20

DRC-01 /096 W

----- 128319

R 011632Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9965

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UK

SUBJECT: LOCAL ELECTIONS IN GREATER LONDON

1. LOCAL ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD FOR LONDON'S 32 BOROUGH COUNCILS ON MAY 2. CAMPAIGNS OF THREE PARTIES (LABOR, CONSERVATIVE, LIBERAL) HAVE BEEN DUTIFULLY REPORTED IN PRESS BUT HAVE NOT GENERATED MUCH PUBLIC OR POLITICAL EXCITEMENT. ALL THREE HAVE BEEN PROFESSING CONFIDENCE THAT RESULTS WILL BE FAVORABLE FOR THEM THOUGH CONSERVATIVE PARTY HEADQUARTERS ARE PRIVATELY RATHER PESSIMISTIC

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ABOUT OUTCOME. WHATEVER RESULTS, THEY WILL BE ANALYZED

CLOSELY BY PARTIES AND MEDIA TO SEE WHAT PORTENTS THEY MAY HOLD FOR ANY POSSIBLE EARLY GENERAL ELECTION. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS IN TERMS OF THEIR NATIONAL POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS WILL BE TRICKY AND POSSIBLY MISLEADING.

2. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS HAVE USUALLY SHOWN A SUBSTANTIAL SWING AWAY FROM PARTY GOVERNING COUNTRY. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT ENOUGH TIME HAS PASSED SINCE FEBRUARY GENERAL ELECTION FOR MUCH REAL CHANGE IN PUBLIC ATTITUDES TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE. LOCAL ISSUES OF DIFFERING INTENSITIES IN BOROUGHES MAY FURTHER CONFUSE RESULTS THOUGH VOTES WILL TEND TO REFLECT NATIONAL PARTY FAVORITES. A SUBSTANTIAL GAIN IN NUMBER OF COUNCIL SEATS HELD BY ANY PARTY (A VIRTUAL CERTAINTY FOR LIBERALS) AND PARTICULARLY AN INCREASE IN NUMBER OF COUNCILS EACH PARTY CONTROLS (LABOR PRESENTLY CONTROLS 21 OF 32) WILL HAVE A TEMPORARY BOOSTING OR DEPRESSING EFFECT ON PARTY MORALE. ANY VERY MAJOR INDICATION OF VOTER SENTIMENT WILL AFFECT CALCULUS OF PARTY DECISIONS ABOUT DESIRABILITY OR LIKELIHOOD OF AN EARLY GENERAL ELECTION.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Remarks:
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